

2026 Rules
Machine/Coach Pitch League
Iowa Valley League

1. **Eligibility.** Those who just completed Kindergarten, 1st Grade, or 2nd Grade, shall be eligible. Parents, coaches, and rec boards may assess the ability level of kindergarten players and retain players in T-Ball if needed.
2. **Schedule.** All teams shall play a 5-week schedule on Sundays in May and June. Specific days in 2026 include: May 31, June 7, June 14, June 21, and June 28. Softball games start at 4:45pm and baseball games begin at 6:00pm. There are no tournaments.
3. **Approved Pitching Machine.** If a team chooses to use a mechanical pitching machine, the approved machine for the league is the Louisville Slugger Ultimate Pitching Machine UPM 45 (Blue Flame). It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the game pitching machine. Coaches are the only authorized operators of the pitching machine. The approved speed settings for the UPM 45 are speed setting 3 on the power lever and 3 on the release block. Fine tuning the micro adjustment from 1-3 with the game ball may be necessary in order to achieve consistent pitches in the strike zone.
4. **Approved Ball.** Maintaining ball consistency will aid in pitch consistency with the UPM-45 machine.
 - a. The recommended baseball is the Diamond DFX-LC1LL Tee Ball.
 - b. The recommended softball is the MacGregor safe/soft 11" training ball.
5. **The Field.** The pitching machine shall be placed at 30-35 feet from home plate. There shall be 60 feet between bases.
6. **Game Play.** A complete game consists of 3 innings or a 1-hour time limit.
 - a. **Defense.** All rostered players shall take the field on defense. Coaches are encouraged to place players in traditional defensive positions. All players must be behind the pitcher until the ball crosses the plate. Players may not stand in base paths, nor form a defensive line in the infield. Teams shall have no more than 2 players positioned near the pitcher's mound. Coaches are encouraged to rotate player positions every inning.
 - b. **Offense.** All rostered players shall bat in the line-up per half inning. All batters are required to wear an approved batting helmet with ear protection. Face masks are not required. Each batter shall receive a **maximum** of 4 pitches. If the batter does not put a pitched ball in the field of play after 4 pitches, the batter will then hit from the tee. Coaches may elect to pitch instead of using the pitching machine. There is no stealing of bases. Coaches are the only authorized base coaches; no players shall be base coaches.
 - c. **Outs.** Outs shall be assessed and the base runner will leave the field of play and return to the dugout. It is only an out if a fly ball is caught, a base is touched before a runner, or a runner is tagged out. No player shall strike out during their at-bat.
 - d. **Last Batter.** The offensive team shall announce "Last Batter" prior to the at-bat. The half inning is complete and the play is over immediately after the last batter puts the ball into the field of

play and the defense gets the last batter out, **or** a player touches home plate with possession of the ball before the last batter arrives, **or** the last batter touches home plate before the ball arrives.

7. Additional Rules.

- a. Catchers: Catchers must wear helmet with face shield and throat protector, chest protector, and shin guards. Coaches can choose not to place a player in that position.
- b. Score Keeping: Official scorebooks shall not be kept. A final score declaring a winner shall not be recorded or reported to league officials. This is strictly a developmental league.
- c. Umpires: Home teams may designate umpires, but it is not required. Coaches may act as umpires and facilitate the game.
- d. Bats: Tee-ball bats and bats labeled with the USA Baseball logo are approved for play. Bats labeled USSSA are NOT allowed.
- e. Teach and develop players. Winning is not everything. Player Development is the priority. Make it fun. Keep it fun. Have Fun!

8. Point of Contact. The point of contact for these rules is the Iowa Valley League, Board of Directors.